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ABSTRACT

This publication contains three background papers on Chinese festivals which are still celebrated by Chinese Americans. The first festival discussed--Ching Ming--is a celebration of the coming of spring and the occasion of the first outing of the year. This paper discusses the historical development of the festival since prehistoric times, presents legends associated with the festival, and tells how Chinese Americans observe the festival today. The second paper traces the history of the Winter Festival from 1,000 B.C. to the present and compares it to the Teutonic Yuletide, which occurs at the same time and is often combined with the traditional Winter Festival activities by Chinese Americans. The author reports on the ceremonies that are observed during the period of the festival, describes the foods that are eaten, and tells how these foods are prepared. The third paper, about the Dragon Boat Festival, traces the historical development of the festival and describes the ceremonial activities associated with it in both north and south China. Two activities are described which might be utilized during a study of the festival in an American classroom. References are included for each section. (Author/DB)

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BACKGROUND MATERIALS

on

CHING MING FESTIVAL

SO 009 085

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San Francisco Unified School District
Chinese Bilingual Pilot Project
March 1972

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CHING MING 清明

The literal translation of Ching Ming is "pure brightness". It is a day for family reunion, for sweeping and cleaning family graves, and for offering ceremonies at the grave sites of ancestors. Indirectly, it is a celebration of the coming of spring and the first outing of the year.

Ching Ming is the most common name given to this festival, although it may be referred to variously as Tree Planting Festival, Memorial Day, Feast of the Tombs, Sweeping of the Tombs, or Pai Shan 拜山 (worship at the hill).

The only Chinese holiday which is dependent on the sun and not the moon, Ching Ming is the 106th day after the winter solstice (December 21). In most years it falls on April 6th. But in leap years it falls on April 5th. This year (1972) Ching Ming comes on the 22nd day of the second moon in the lunar calendar.

In prehistoric time, the young people in Asia used to celebrate a spring festival in which the boys and girls from the villages gathered at the river banks in large numbers. There they gathered flowers to put on their heads, feasted, sang to each other, and danced together. Finally lovers pledged themselves to each other. This was the festival in which the young people celebrated their initiation of a marriage which would be concluded in the autumn when food was plentiful after the harvest. The spring festival was then an agrarian fertility feast -- a supplication for fruitfulness both of the land and mankind.

Ching Ming, a celebration of the coming of spring in ancient times, became a fixed day on the calendar as government officials adopted the festival. And as China became more developed, or "civilized", her scholars frowned on such license as was practiced in the ancient spring festivals. A new set of mores evolved. The symbolic fertility rite was transformed to the formalized rites and ceremonies for ancestors who now became the focal protective force for the welfare of the descendants.

C. K. Yang in Religion in Chinese Society pointed out that the universal observance of festivals served to relieve the monotony of daily life and that festivals were "reminders of critical social values, and their celebration performed the function of periodically reaffirming the value system of a community. Ching Ming rituals or 'sweeping the tombs' recalled for the individual his kinship ties."

On the eve of Ching Ming was another feast day, Han Shih (cold food), a custom which used to be observed in northern China but has now died out. On this day no hot food was served as there could be no fire. It seemed to be a carry-over from ancient time when this region was inhabited by semi-nomadic tribes. At that time their year was divided into two halves -- winter in huts on the plain and summer in tents on the mountainside among the cultivated fields. And every year the fire had to be relighted in the summer camp on Ching Ming Day. Thus the festival Ching Ming marked a change in tempo from a relatively non-productive winter to the vigorous outdoor life of summer.

There is a legend connected with the cold food feast. In about the 6th century B.C. a petty feudal lord in North China had to flee for his life with only a few loyal followers. They had nothing to eat. The hero, Chieh Tzu-t'ui, cut off a piece of his own leg and served it to his starving lord, thus saving his life. Later when the lord succeeded in his struggle, he forgot about Chieh Tzu-t'ui. Eventually though, the lord did remember his faithful friend. However, by that time, the disillusioned Chieh Tzu-t'ui had left civilization to live in a forest. Despite offers of gifts, he could not be induced to leave his forest. The lord thought that if he set the forest on fire, Chieh would have to come out. But instead, Chieh chose to die in the flames. Grieved, the lord ordered that no fire should be lighted on the anniversary of that day in commemoration of Chieh Tzu-t'ui.

In the Moon Year Bredon and Mitrophanow attempted to explain how Ching Ming came to be connected with the dead and later replaced what was originally a festival of life. " . . . . the basic idea underlying all Chinese religious feelings is the ancestor cult ... one of man's several souls remains near his grave, hovering about this world, and maintaining contact with his descendants through a subtle connection with his mortal remains. Such a kuei or spirit, has definite requirements of worship and sacrifice at stated intervals -- the annual festival of the dead. It has also definite powers for good and harm.... (It may be said) that the Chinese believe the dead still dwell in this world and rule it, influencing not only the destinies of men, but the

conditions of nature. Hence the natural desire of an agricultural people to choose the period of the year's rebirth for tomb sacrifices. Craving the blessing of the ancestors on the first fruits of the harvest sown in the true spring of the year, men propitiate the ghost-gods -- for the souls of the departed to take on, to some degree, the powers of gods -- at Ching Ming, with offerings of agreeable foods, of music, of burnt sacrifices, in short, of whatever is likely to put them in a good humor."

Long time ago there used to be no cemeteries in China. Each family had its own graveyard in the fields. The Chinese believed that man belonged to the soil -- not the soil to man. Therefore it was natural for man to return to the soil at death. There was genuine grief when loved ones departed. But death was considered as one of the natural processes of life. This acceptance helped to alleviate much of the fear of the unknown void (darkness) of death.

Ching Ming, although a festival of the dead, is usually a gay celebration except for those who are recently bereaved. If possible, everyone tries to return to his native province at this time to pay his respect to the departed ancestors. Preferably, a day or two before Ching Ming, the graves are prepared or made ready for the occasion -- the sweeping of the grave. At his time the person in charge, usually the eldest of the clan, has the chore of seeing to it that the family burial ground is repaired and weeds are pulled from the graves, a general tidying-up of the graveyard. In years gone by the caretaker of the family's burial

ground also managed the fields adjoining it. Thus the returns from the fields paid for the maintenance of the graveyard.

Early on the day of Ching Ming the countryside comes alive with people in festive mood, making their way to their ancestors' tombs. The procession usually includes the whole family. The ceremonies at the graveside are usually performed by the head of the clan and then each family member does likewise, or sometimes, only the male members participate.

An explosion of firecrackers heralds the arrival of the clan at the burial ground. Candles and incense are then lighted and food placed on the tomb. The head of the clan starts the ceremony by bowing three times. He then holds up dishes of food between uplifted hands and invites the dead to partake of the feast. Mock money is burned, accompanied by the pouring of wine on the grave and more firecrackers. This ceremony is repeated at each grave. Lest any distant ancestor be neglected, a general sacrifice is made to all clan-ancestors in addition to the personal sacrifices to the last few generations.

After the ceremonies the family may gather at the graveside to eat the food, the spiritual part of which has already been absorbed by the ancestors, leaving only the material part behind for the living descendants. Or they may gather all the food to be taken home for their Ching Ming feast. Before leaving, two squares of paper are placed on each grave and held down by stones or clumps of earth. Another explosion of firecrackers concludes the ceremony.

It is important that these annual visits to the graves are made to repair and sweep the graves, for such care constitutes an assertion to the ownership of the land. In some cases, the squares of paper placed on the graves indicate to the world that the deceased have living descendants. As long as the graves are cared for every year, the right to ownership of the land is renewed annually. An unswept grave indicates that the family had died out. After a lapse of time, and if no one comes to make sacrificial offerings according to established customs, the grave gradually melts into the surrounding fields. Others may then claim the land. So long as the grave is cared for and the right to ownership is maintained, no one dares to encroach or desecrate the grave.

In dynastic China flowers were not allowed as grave decorations, because in ancient time placing or planting of flowers at gravesides was a privilege reserved to members of the reigning family only. But willow branches were permitted and were often found hung under the eaves of the houses.

There is a legend connected with the use of the willow branch. During the T'ang dynasty a certain leader planned an uprising against the regime. He took the willow branch as his standard. He passed the word that his sympathizers should put a willow branch under the eaves of their houses. Ching Ming was the signal day for the start of the rebellion. The insurgents had instructions to spare those houses showing the willow branch. And today the descendants keep up the tradition in remembrance of the security which the willow branch had once offered them.

Everyone tries to be back in his native province at Ching Ming. But the people who live too far away to make the journey can send a deputy. If they are away from home, they perform the following ceremony wherever they may be. First they take some paper bags which are especially designed for this purpose and fill them with mock paper money. These square foot paper bags are decorated with two human figures surrounded by symbolic printed flowers. The name of the ancestor for whom the bag is intended is inscribed in the space left between the decorations. The head of the family places a number of these money-filled bags on the altar along with food offerings. He performs the ceremony as he would at the actual grave: he bows his head three times, offers the food with uplifted hands, and pours cups of wine on the ground. After the ceremony the offering bags are carried outside to the street and burned near the front door. These ceremonies must be performed before sundown, as the spirits of the ancestors, who are believed to have come to spend the day with their descendants, must get back to their graves before the city gates close at night fall.

In addition to the visitation to ancestors' graves, Ching Ming, on the official level, is also a tree-planting day. Before the founding of the republic in 1912, the emperor or a prince, as his deputy, used to plant trees on the palace grounds. Now the president or his deputies usually hold tree-planting ceremonies in public places.

How do the Chinese Americans celebrate this day?

The early arrivals here had no ancestral graves to visit. Their deputies in China attended to the family tombs there. The family associations usually celebrated this day in group activities. They went to a make-shift cemetery and pulled the weeds and tall grass from the graves of friends or relatives who were buried there. The ceremony of putting out food, pouring wine on the graves, burning red candles and incense, burning mock money and clothing was carried out as in China. The offering ceremony was accompanied by many firecracker explosions which were supposed to drive away evil spirits.

Many Chinese used to ship the bones of the deceased back to China to be buried in the native villages of the dead. This practice has become impossible now. Many have also abandoned the practice of burying their dead in the Chinese cemeteries. In many cases, the cemeteries that they have chosen do not allow the burning of the mock money or the exploding of firecrackers. Some still place food on the tombs. But more often, the descendants come at Ching Ming only to place flowers on the graves.

The associations still sponsor some sort of picnic-like outings. Many conclude the day with yet another meal in Chinatown. Although the day of the festival, Ching Ming, is a fixed one on the calendar, the celebration of it is flexible, usually occuring on the weekend closest to the actual date.

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WINTER FESTIVAL 冬節

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San Francisco Unified School District
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WINTER FESTIVAL

During the winter solstice on December 22, which falls on the eleventh moon in the Chinese lunar calendar, the Chinese celebrate a holiday called the Winter Festival or Tung Chih (冬至, 冬節).

The origin of the Winter Festival may be traced back to the Chou Dynasty about 1,000 B.C. At that time the eleventh moon was actually designated as the first month of the year; the Winter Festival celebration took place during the New Year. Later dynasties readjusted the New Year season to the first moon again.

It is not surprising that a festival is still being celebrated on the shortest day of the year. After the winter solstice the days begin to lengthen; the yang force of the sun is once more in ascendance. It is a period of rebirth and the start of another productive season.

Bredon and Mitrophanow point out in The Moon Year that "the Chinese are not alone in their observance of a festival at this season .... It was only natural that among primitive people who watched with awe the long encroachment of the night upon the day and suffered from the chill and gloom of dying\nature that the first sign of a new victory of light over darkness should be celebrated as an occasion of rejoicing... The Chinese period of Tung Chih, which begins at the winter solstice and lasts twelve days, exactly corresponds to the Teutonic Yule-tide." Hence the expression "Yang Tung Chih," "Yang" meaning foreign, is sometimes used for Christmas.

Before the abolition of the Ching Dynasty in China the Winter Festival was observed with solemn ceremonies by the emperor and high officials. It was an occasion for giving thanks to Heaven, Earth, and the Imperial Ancestors for blessings received during the past year.

Reverend Justus Doolittle, a missionary in China for twenty years, recorded these ceremonies in detail in his book, Social Life of the Chinese. The following paragraphs are his description of the roles played by the high officials in observance of the Winter Festival in the mid-1800's.

On the day of the Winter Festival, the viceroy and other high military and civil mandarins started the ceremony very early in the morning. Before daybreak, these high officials, dressed in their official robes went to a large building near the west gate of the city called the emperor's temple. Towards the back of the temple was situated the emperor's tablet. To the front of this tablet the officials gathered for the ceremony. "At a signal given by the master of ceremonies, these high mandarins, in perfect silence and in the most respectful manner, all kneel down on both knees in the places alloted to their rank and office, and knock their heads on or bow them near the stone pavement once, twice, thrice. Then they all simultaneously rise to their feet at a certain signal.... They now repeat the operation of rising and kneeling etc.... a ceremony called 'three kneelings and nine knockings'.... After this, they return to their respective yamuns (official residences) and spend the day in feasting.

"The object of all this is to congratulate the Son of Heaven, the emperor of China, on the arrival of the winter solstice. High mandarins at the capital perform a similar ceremony before the emperor himself or before a yellow screen which personifies the emperor. At the same time, the high officers of government, in the large cities of the empire... situated at a distance from the Imperial City, perform the ceremony of 'three kneelings and nine knockings' before the emperor's tablet in the temple dedicated to him... as described above..."

The emperor also went to the temple in the Imperial City and performed the same ceremony. He, too, gave thanks to Heaven and Earth for the triumph of light over darkness and goodness over evil.

The common people were not involved in this official ceremony. But they, nevertheless, observed the festival by purchasing various foods for the Winter Festival feast. Wine, incense, candles, and mock-money were also included in the shopping list. When the foods were cooked, they were arranged before the ancestral tablets along with lighted incense and candles. A quantity of the mock-money was burned. Then the family members knelt and bowed before the tablets. After the ceremony at the family altar, the family allowed some time to elapse so that the spirits of the ancestors could partake of the spiritual part of the feast first. Then the family gathered round to eat the material part of the meal. This was symbolic of the reunion of the family on earth and in heaven.

Food for this feast should include: items which have the Chinese character for winter 冬 as part of their names -- winter melon 冬瓜, dried black mushrooms 冬菰, winter bamboo shoots 冬筍, Chinese herbs that are good for one's health 冬蟲草, 杞子, preserved meats which are traditional winter meats -- Chinese sausage 臘腸, preserved duck 臘鴨, preserved pork 臘肉, and root vegetables and nuts that are available during the winter season -- lotus roots 蓮藕, Chinese turnips 蘿蔔, and peanuts 花生.

A fairly universal practice and one peculiar to the Winter Festival is the making and eating of a special kind of glutinous rice flour dumpling 湯圓. On the eve of the Winter Festival, a quantity of flour, made from glutinous rice, is mixed with water and kneaded to make a thick dough.

If a son in the family has married since the last Winter Festival and has brought his bride home, then it is the duty of his bride, wearing a red skirt, to prepare this rice flour dough. A bride, wearing a red skirt and kneading the dough, is considered a good omen: a newcomer wearing new clothes and asking blessings on a new home for the first time is supposed to thus insure that there will be plenty to eat and wear for her and her relations.

After the dough has been made, the whole family, young and old, male and female, gather round and participate in the making of the rice flour balls. These balls are made by taking a little bit of the dough and working it into a small round ball about three quarters of an inch in diameter. The dough balls are then set aside until morning.

The first thing on Winter Festival Day is the cooking of these balls by boiling them in water. Some of these cooked rice flour dumplings are put into common eating bowls which are set before the ancestral tablets and household gods. Incense and candles are burned but no actual worship takes place. Afterwards every member of the family eats some of the dumplings.

In northern China a kind of pork dumpling is prepared for the celebration of the Winter Festival. In the South, some people put a piece of brown sugar in the middle. For the most part, the dumplings are plain. Farmers' wives also often make crude figures of pigs and chickens for the home altar as an entreaty for blessings on their livestock.

Some people limit the dumplings to twelve -- one for each month of abundant food asked or thanked for. Other families make extra balls to stick them on the posts of the outer door and windows. Usually only one is stuck on each post of the door and windows. This sacrifice to the Gods of the Doors is an appeal to the gods for peace and plenty.

The roundness of the glutinous rice flour balls may have some reference to the approaching close of the year. The gathering of the family in the making and consuming of these balls together signifies the harmoniousness of family life when all members recognize and practice the reciprocal exercise of parental, filial, and fraternal love and duties.

A married daughter is no longer considered a member of her father's family. But if a daughter has married since the last Winter Festival, she is expected, if living within a reasonable distance, to send several bowls of these cooked rice flour balls to her parents' house as a sign of her unabated filial attachment.

Families which are in mourning due to the loss of a parent during the past year are not supposed to prepare the rice flour from which the balls are made, the reason being that the process involved in the making of the rice flour -- buying the rice, pounding it into flour, sifting and drying it -- would not be seemly mourning conduct. But if friends or relatives were to give them the flour, they could then proceed to make the rice flour dumplings.

Winter Festival is an occasion for rejoicing in the rebirth of the sun, the new productive cycle, and the promise of the coming spring. It is a time of feasting and family reunion After the first decade of this century, ceremonies performed at the temple of the emperor were abolished along with the monarchy. What remains are the making of the rice flour dumplings and the gathering of families for reunion feasts.

Today the observance of Winter Festival is overshadowed by Christmas celebrations. Some Chinese Americans still observe the custom of making and eating the rice flour dumplings on Winter Festival Day. But there are others who have substituted the Christmas family gathering for the family reunion feast that was once so important a feature of the Winter Festival.

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DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

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Chinese Bilingual Pilot Project
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The Dragon Boat Festival

On the fifth day of the fifth moon in the lunar calendar, the Chinese celebrate a festival called Wu Yueh Chieh (五月節) or the Feast of the Fifth Moon. This festival may also be referred to variously as Tuan Wu Chieh (端午節) or the Double Fifth Festival. To most foreigners, though, it is better known as the Dragon Boat Festival because of the colorful and exciting dragon boat races (賽龍船) which highlight the celebration of this festival in central and southern China. This year the Dragon Boat Festival falls on June 15th in the solar calendar.

This festival is celebrated in commemoration of the death of Chu Yuan (屈原), a high-principled, third century B.C. statesman-poet. Chu Yuan, who lived during what is known as the Warring States Period (403-221 B.C.), was a high official in the feudal kingdom of Chu (楚國) in what are now the provinces of Hupei and Hunan. Chu Yuan prized his country's independence, so he worked hard to forge many alliances with other friendly kingdoms against the strong and hostile kingdom of Chin. To strengthen the kingdom internally, he advocated basic reforms. Those who had much to lose if his reforms were carried out became his staunch enemies in Court. They began to plot against him and sought to undermine his influence with the King. Finally, thoroughly discredited by his enemies, he was banished from Court. He wrote poetry as he wandered the countryside. He watched the decline of his country with deepening grief and despair. Despondent over the life-style and ethics of the Court, and fearful for the safety of his country, he threw himself

into a river on the fifth day of the fifth moon as an act of protest against the corruption of the Court and an affirmation of his devotion and love for his country.

After his death his countrymen, who loved him, threw rice into the river to feed his ghost. One day Chu Yuan's spirit appeared before some fishermen and told them that a water monster (a dragon) had been stealing the rice that they had intended for him. He instructed them to wrap the rice in pieces of silk and tie these small bundles with five different colored silk threads. He told them that the monster would not dare to touch any offerings prepared in this manner. The people followed his advice and wrapped their rice in bundles before throwing it into the river.

The dragon boat racing, which has become connected with the celebration of this festival, has an important symbolic function besides that of providing amusement for the public. The dragon boat races symbolize, in part, the rescue efforts of the people rushing to the spot where Chu Yuan had drowned himself. In addition, the dragon boat races symbolize real dragons in struggle against each other. There is an ancient belief that rain comes from "dragon battles" in the sky. Donald MacKenzie in his Myths of China and Japan explains the connection between the dragons and rainfall. "In China, the season of drought is winter. The dragons are supposed to sleep in their pools during the dry spell.... The dragons are supposed to sleep so that they may preserve their bodies. They begin to stir and rise in spring. Soon they fight with one another... a 'dragon battle'.... Thunderstorms break out, and rain pours down

in torrents." The purpose of the dragon boat races then is to induce real dragon fights, preferably involving as many dragons and over as large an area as possible, in order to produce plentiful rainfall for the crops.

The dragon has always played a significant role in Chinese folklore. Its powers for good and evil are enormous. It plays an especially prominent role in the spring and summer as the guardian of water -- in the form of rain. There is reason to believe that the legend of Chu Yuan evolved from, and then replaced, the ancient cult of worshipping of the River God.

Quite possibly the first Water Divinities included the ghosts of the drowned people, who, according to Chinese beliefs, were condemned to wander by the manner of their death. These spirits were prone to be mischievous if not placated by offerings at this important season when the crops were growing and in need of rain. The practice of throwing rice into the river as offering to the River God existed long before Chu Yuan was born.

The evolution of the concept of the River God is undocumented. However, there is a popular belief that a man-eating tiger is animated by the soul of its victim, and a man-eating alligator, which devours the drowned, is similarly endowed with the spirits and powers of the drowned. Alligators and dragons belong to the same reptile family. And according to the 200 A.D. Chinese dictionary, Shuo Wen (說文解字), the dragon is the king of the 369 species of scaly reptiles. Quite naturally then, the dragon gradually becomes the embodiment of the River God as the controller of the waters and the dispenser of rain.

The Dragon Boat Festival is essentially a southern holiday although it is observed everywhere in China. The southern part of China, having many lakes and rivers, lends itself favorably to the colorful pageantry of the dragon boat racing. The holiday, in fact, has its origin in South China.

Chu Yuan was undoubtedly a historical character. Chu Yuan's family was living in a part of China that was sparsely populated by Chinese at the time. The population consisted largely of native groups belonging to different cultural backgrounds. But eventually, as the Chinese civilization spread southward, these tribal groups were absorbed by the Chinese. And, in turn, the Chinese adopted many of the native customs and beliefs.

The following account offered by Wolfram Eberhard in the Chinese Festivals describes how the ancient Tai (one of the native groups in South China) celebrated their spring and summer festivals. Eberhard thinks that these celebrations may have been the forerunner of the present day Dragon Boat Festival. These festivals were celebrated in connection with the growth of the rice crop -- their main source of food supply. "The idea of fertility was the center of their primitive world concept, and for them fertility was life -- in plants, in animals, and in man. To secure fertility of the fields one had to give strength and vigor. Since man was the strongest creature of the universe, a human sacrifice would be the best one could give. The Tai tribes in South China sacrificed men at a time when such a practice was unheard of in any other part of China. The way to acquire the victim was always the same, head-hunting....

The preferred victim was a stranger, because then no retaliation from relatives or his tribe was possible. So the Chinese settlers in South China were the chosen victims for a time.... When, with the growing influence of Chinese civilization in these parts of South China, head-hunting became impracticable..., a sham fight between two groups took its place.... Two groups stood on either side and sang and danced. Then they tried to wade through the river .... It's believed that this was the original form of our dragon boat festival, the boats being added later, in the coastal sections of central and South China, replacing the original custom of wading through the water."

The rice offerings for Chu Yuan are now wrapped in leaves and tied with strings. These are called tsung (粽) and are made with glutinous rice and boiled in their leaf-wrappings for hours. They are eaten all over China as part of the celebration of this festival.

In North China the holiday is marked by various land sports and picnics. But in Central and South China the festival is observed with much fanfare. It is an all-day celebration, with the dragon boat race as the central attraction of the day. The following paragraphs are taken from Eberhard's description of this eventful day:

> When the great day arrives, crowds in the coastal provinces of Central and South China hire boats or go to the shore of the nearest river or lake, dressed in their best holiday costumes.... A barely perceptible breeze keeps the small boats in constant movement. They float around without aim or direction while the celebrants eat

their dinner, talk, or admire the neighbor's boat....

The crowds on the shore are perhaps still gayer. They move around from one shed of straw mats to another, or sit under one of the bamboo awnings and drink tea....

And suddenly the parade of the dragon boats has begun.... they are big -- up to a hundred feet in length -- and so narrow that two members of the crew have difficulty sitting side by side. The body of the boat is shaped like a dragon, and the high prow shows the beast's fierce mouth and its dangerous fangs; the sides are gaily painted and gilded, with red the prominent color.... The crew consists not only of rowers but also of men waving flags and playing cymbals or beating gongs. And so the parade of the dragon boats is accompanied by a deafening noise, as it is during the race.

The boats are manned by different guilds or clubs... a tremendous increase in prestige for the crew that wins the contest...an exciting as well as esthetic sight -- the slim, shining boats shooting through the water! The motion of the crew is coordinated and rhythmic to the utmost....

The evening following the race brings another high light of the festival, as the boats, decorated with colorful lanterns, parade on the river. Slowly they pass the crowds, emerging from the still, lukewarm, dark waters like fairies, and disappearing again in the phosphorescent gleam of the summer night.

Since this is also a holiday celebrating the coming of summer and harvest time, the usual offerings to the gods must be made. Nor are the ancestors forgotten at this time. For they, too, are called upon to exert their good influences on behalf of their descendants. In short, everything possible is done to insure a bountiful harvest.

For the overseas Chinese, this holiday is a relatively quiet one. Weeks in advance, some families prepare for the holiday by making a quantity of tsung for their own families and friends. Others buy theirs from the store. Some may choose, on this day, to pay special tribute to their ancestors, a token of remembrance.

The following are two activities which may be used in a classroom situation:

1. Show a film on dragon boat racing. The Hong Kong Tourist Association and China Airlines will loan out films on the Dragon Boat Festival at the request of teachers.
2. Make and decorate paper boats for own races. There are simple directions for making rowboats and Chinese fishing boats in Maying Soong's The Art of Chinese Paper Folding.

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